

REMARKS

Claims 1-89 currently remain in the application. Claims 1, 11, 17, 22, 23, 35, 43-47, 49, 55, 57-89 have been amended.

Claim 40 was inadvertently omitted. Claims 41-90 have been renumbered to claims 40-89 as suggested by the Examiner. Claim dependency has been modified where affected by the renumbering.

Claim Objections

Claims 11, 17, 22, 23, 33, 35, 47, 55, 80 and 82 have been amended and the objections are believed overcome thereby.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claim 86 has been amended and the rejection is believed overcome thereby.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103

The Examiner rejected claims 1-89 U.S.C. 103 (a) as being unpatentable over Raven et al. (5,429,361) in view of Seibert, Jr. et al. (US patent No. 6,174,234). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

The present invention, as recited in claims 1-89, describes a player tracking unit comprising i) a front panel, ii) a display coupled to the front panel for dynamically displaying at least player tracking information and iii) one or more of illumination devices coupled to the front panel and adjacent to said display for conveying information related to functions of the player tracking unit wherein the one or more illumination devices are operable to convey information for a game player on a gaming machine. The combination of Raven and Seibert does not teach these limitations.

In Raven, the single LED 36 is next to the key pad 32. It is not adjacent to the display as recited in claims 1-89. Further, in Raven (Col. 9, lines 60-67), the single LED conveys information only for casino personnel. The LED 36 in Raven is not described as operable to convey information to a game player.

Seibert does not describe player tracking units. The lights in Seibert are not located on the front panel of a player tracking panel. In one embodiment, in Seibert, a first single light 401 is located near to a character display 402. The character display 402 is simply a character painted onto a translucent panel with a light below it. Lights 401 and 402 are not located on a player tracking unit as recited in claim 1. The static character display in Seibert is not for dynamically

displaying at least player tracking information as recited in claim 1. In Seibert, the light 401 next to the character display 402 is not for conveying information related to functions of the player tracking unit as recited in claim 1. Therefore, for at least these reasons, Seibert can't be said to teach or suggest, as recited in claims 1-89, "one or more of illumination devices coupled to the front panel and adjacent to said display for conveying information related to functions of the player tracking unit wherein the one or more illumination devices are operable to convey information for a game player on a gaming machine."

In the present invention, one advantage of locating the illumination next to the player tracking display is that signals from the one or more illumination devices, such as a color change, can be combined with text messages from the display. This increases the likelihood of the player understanding the information from the illumination device. Further, the positioning the illumination device next to the display allows the illumination device to be used to draw the game players attention to the player tracking display, which can be used to provide additional information to the game player.

In contrast, in Raven, the LED 36 is only for displaying information of interest to casino personnel, such as if a player is a high roller or not. Since a casino does not necessarily want to draw attention to the fact that a player is not necessarily a high roller and the information is not for the game player, the LED 36 is located away from the player interface display to avoid distracting the player or drawing the player's attention to the LED. Raven does not provide any teaching or motivation for locating the LED 36 next to the display.

Applicant also wishes to draw Examiner's attention to claims 6 and 7 of the present invention, which correspond to embodiments in FIGs. 2B and 2C, of the present invention. In these embodiments, the one or more illumination devices are designed to substantially surround the display or a portion of the perimeter of the display. Applicant does not see how the single LED lighting device 36 in Raven or the single light 401 in Seibert teach or suggest one or more illumination devices arranged in the manner shown in FIGs 2B and 2C and recited in claims 6 and 7.

In conclusion, for at least the reasons described above, the combination of Raven and Seibert, can't be said to render the present invention as recited in claims 1-89 obvious and the rejection of claims 1-89 is believed overcome thereby.

Applicant believes that all pending claims are allowable and respectfully requests a Notice of Allowance for this application from the Examiner. Should the Examiner believe that a telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of this application, the undersigned can be reached at the telephone number set out below.

Respectfully submitted,
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